

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BOGOTA 05193 222309 Z

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ACTION ARA-17

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 IO-13 JUSE-00 NSAE-00

RSC-01 SNM-02 SY-10 TRSE-00 NSC-10 SCI-06 OMB-01 SS-15

AID-20 PA-03 PRS-01 RSR-01 /111 W
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P R 222146 Z JUN 73

FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8129

INFO USIA WASHDC

BUREAU OF CUSTOMS WASHDC

BNDD HQTS WASHDC

AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

UNCLAS BOGOTA 5193

E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: SNAR, CO

SUBJECT: DESTRUCTION OF CONFISCATED DRUGS

CUSTOMS FOR OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

BNDD HQTS FOR ENCC AND IA O

SUMMARY:

1. ON JUNE 20 COLOMBIAN GOVT OFFICIALS BEGAN THE DESTRUCTION OF THE ILLEGAL DRUGS STORED IN THE BANK OF THE REPUBLIC. AFTER VERIFICATION OF THE WEIGHT AND CONTENTS AND IN THE PRESENCE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PRESS AND THE EMBASSY THE OFFICIALS DISSOLVED 17,498 GRAMS OF COCAINE AND POURED IT DOWN THE DRAIN.

2. ONE DAY AFTER COLOMBIA'S LEADING NEWSPAPER, EL TIEMPO, EDITORIALY ATTACKED THE FAILURE OF THE GOVERNMENT TO COMPLY WITH A PRESIDENTIAL ORDER TO DESTROY ALL SEIZED NARCOTICS, AND TEN DAYS AFTER THE DEADLINE SET DOWN BY THE PRESIDENT FOR THAT DESTRUCTION, GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS BEGAN THE DESTRUCTION OF THE DRUGS STORED IN THE BANK OF THE REPUBLIC. DRUGS SEIZED
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PAGE 02 BOGOTA 05193 222309 Z

SINCE THE PRESIDENTIAL ORDER WENT INTO EFFECT HAVE ALREADY BEEN DESTROYED.

3. IN THE PRESENCE OF THE VICE MINISTER OF JUSTICE, REPRESENTATIVES OF CUSTOMS, THE NATIONAL POLICE, DAS, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE, THE INSTITUTE OF LEGAL MEDICINE, THE EIGHT JUDGES WHO HAD HANDLED CASES INVOLVING THE SEIZED DRUGS, MEMBERS OF THE PRESS, 17,498 GRAMS OF COCAINE (174.98 KILOS) WERE WEIGHTED, SAMPLED FOR LABORATORY DETERMINATION OF THEIR CONTENTS, DISSOLVED, AND POURED DOWN THE DRAINS. A USIS OFFICER, FILM CREW, AND PHOTOGRAPHER WERE ON HAND TO FILM THE DESTRUCTION.

4. THE EXACT TOTAL OF DRUGS HELD IN THE BANK IS NOT KNOWN AND OFFICIALS WOULD NOT RESPOND TO PRESS REQUESTS FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THAT FIGURE. THEY DID SAY THAT ALL THE DRUGS HAD NOT BEEN DESTROYED BECAUSE THE JUDGES WHO TRIED THE CASES INVOLVING THE DRUGS WERE NOT PRESENT TO CERTIFY THE DESTRUCTION. NO DATE WAS GIVEN FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF THE REMAINING DRUGS.

5. THE DRUGS DESTROYED WERE CONFISCATED IN CASES INVOLVING THE FOLLOWING PERSONS:

A. CARLOS ALBERTO VARELA AND OTHERS-- 230 GRAMS COCAINE

B. JORGE ESPINEL TORO AND HERMANDO GARCIA OROZCO--
1,028 GRAMS OF COCAINE.

C. PRICE W. SPEECE AND OTHERS--230 GRAMS OF COCAINE

D. NORLANDO CANAVERAL AND OTHERS-- 2,000 GRAMS OF COCAINE
BNDD ZE 73 0002)

E. JOSE MIGUEL PRIETO ALBA-- 2,995 GRAMS OF COCAINE
(BNDD ZE 73 0003)

F. FERMAN JIMENEZ PANESSO AND OTHERA -- 7,408 GRAMS
OF COCAINE (BNDD ZE 72 0001)

G. MARIELA GONZALEZ DE ANGEL-- 2,506 GRAMS OF COCAINE.

H. EUDITRUDIS ANTONIO MATOS AND JOSE STALIN SAFAIR--
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PAGE 03 BOGOTA 05193 222309 Z

551.2 GRAMS OF COCAINE

I. MARIA BENEVOLO, WIDOW OF FUARTE AND OTHERS-- 550
GRAMS OF COCAINE.

6. COMMENT: EL TIEMPO POINTED OUT IN ITS COVERAGE OF THE
DESTRUCTION THAT ONLY THREE OF THE PEOPLE ARRESTED IN CONJUNCTION

WITH THE SEIZURES DESTROYED ARE STILL IN JAIL. ALL THE REST
HAVE BEEN RELEASED FROM CUSTODY.
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TAGS: SNAR, CO
To: ARA
BNDD HQTS WASHDC
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